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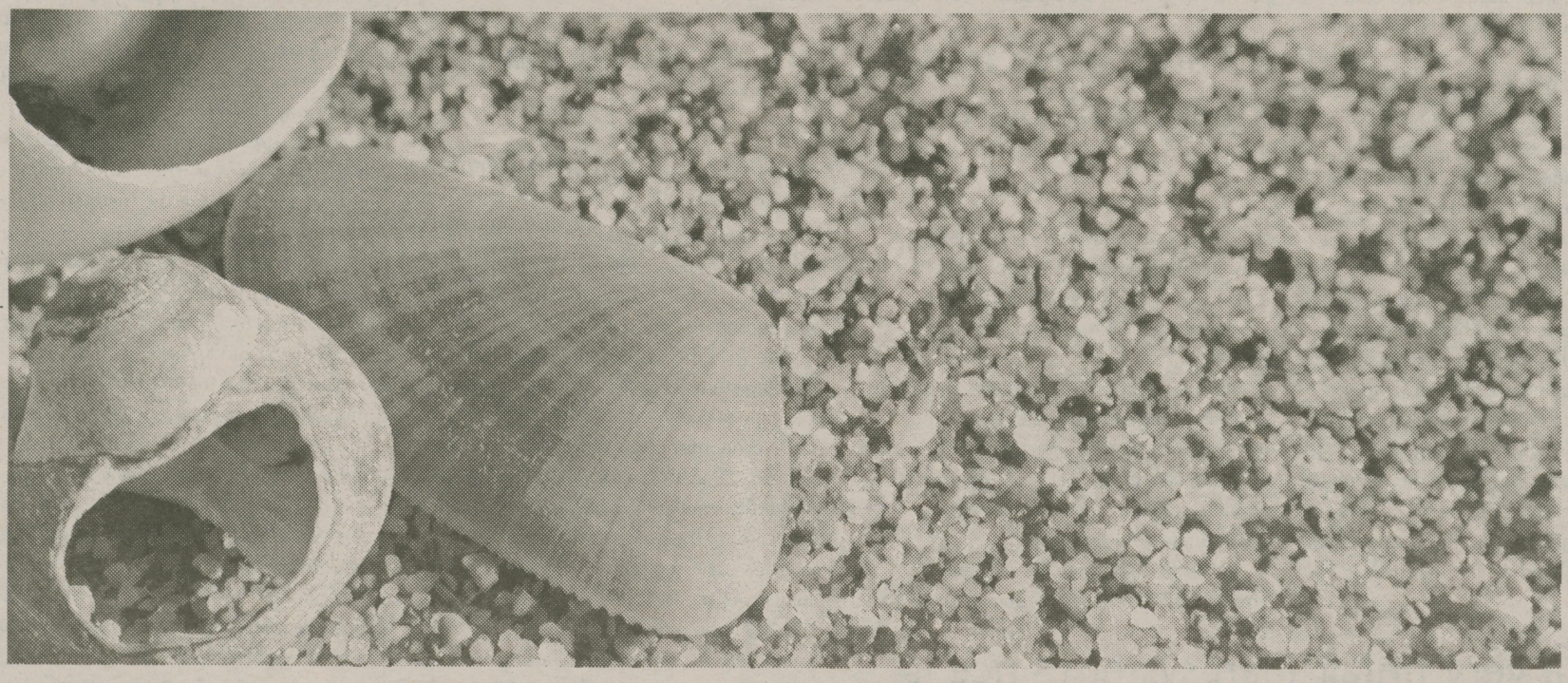
summer solstice

JUNE 21 / 2001 [54.02]

summer's here!



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Fifty "dead" at legislature

Victorians hold die-in to oppose Liberal regime

by Jason Gondziola

Children chirped excitedly, tourists snapped pictures and the faintest echo of bagpipes reverberated off granite pillars. With the exception of the corpses strewn around the legislature steps, it was a day like any other in Victoria's Inner Harbour.

But a procession of mourners made up of nearly 100 university students, First Nations citizens, labour unionists and environmentalists interrupted the serene scene. The group walked from the far-end of the lawn to the front steps, blaring out a funeral dirge as they walked.

As the procession neared the steps, a large casket was set down, and one by one, everyone fell to the ground. It was a mock death representing the "threat" of the Liberal Agenda, organizers said. The protesters said they shared a common bond of having something to lose under the mandate of the new Liberal government.

"We want to send a message to the new government," said Fay Blaney of the Aboriginal Women's Action Network. "We intend to be a grass roots extra parliamentary opposition."

"Death of the bears," said one. "Death of the environment," said another, reading like a roll call of social programs. "Death of universal healthcare," cried out one protester as she crumbled earthward. A handful of First Nations women drummed out a tribal rhythm, and soon after, the radical cheerleaders rallied the crowd.

Protesters said they're particularly concerned with the Liberal government's control of the legislature, without an official opposition. Many said they were disturbed by the unquestioning power the Liberal government would hold over the next five years. "We want to keep them uncomfortable," said Paul Sam, who ran for the provincial NDP last month. "Mr. Campbell, get used to it."

photo by Jason Gondziola

Protesters and social programs bite the dust on legislature steps.

photo by Jason Gondziola

Procession of mourners approaches the legislature.

Some protesters had another suggestion.

"We the people will be the opposition," said Kathryn Saunders after the mock carnage. "Join the people's opposition! Resist! Rebel!"

Sarah Webb, director of academics for the University of Victoria Student's Society was present, getting the crowd involved in the cheers.

"I'm here to make sure that the tuition freeze takes top priority in the provincial government," she said. "I find it very concerning that the Liberal government has refused to take a stand on so many social issues."

Fellow UVSS member, Michelle Kinney, said she shared these concerns.

"[The Liberals] are blatantly not putting their agenda out there," she said. "We can't hold them responsible – they've made no promises."

UVic Social Work student Shane Calder shared this opinion.

"Today is just a start," he said. "The water's just starting to boil."

The procession picked up from the legislature and made their way to Government House, where Gordon Campbell was being inaugurated. At one point, two unidentified protesters tried to jam one of the gates closed using a bike lock but the security staff stopped them. Victoria police did not interfere with the demonstration but shot videos of the people present.

Liberals admit possible Student Loan change

Tuition freeze in question as new government considers income contingent repayment

by Kevin Groves

Student groups are nervous that the British Columbia Student Loan program might be set for an overhaul as anticipation continues to mount over what direction the Gordon Campbell Liberals will take for post-secondary education.

The burning question is whether the Liberals will implement Income Contingent Repayment (ICR) of student loans, which the Canadian Federation of Students said could give the Liberals an excuse to remove the tuition fee freeze.

"[ICR] is a very unfair loan system since it discriminates against lower incomes," said Summer McFadyen, B.C. chair of the federation. "This idea has been around for a long time and was originally designed to be a funding model, rather than a model that benefits students."

Under the ICR system, tuition could be raised since students would have access to large loans with the option of making small payments as a percentage of income upon graduation. The catch is that graduates with lower income jobs, who cannot make large lump-sum payments, would pay more interest on their loans over a longer period of time, while those in higher paying jobs could repay their loans quickly and avoid interest payments.

> It's an excuse to raise tuition, not a loan repayment plan.
>
> *Jaime Matten*

> [ICR] is a very unfair loan system since it discriminates against lower incomes.
>
> *Summer McFadyen*

"I'm worried," said Jaime Matten, Chair of the University of Victoria Student Society. "The Liberals have never taken a strong position on supporting the freeze."

Referring to ICR as a "huge problem," Matten added that it would remove the interest-free period students are currently subject to while in school. Women would also be discriminated against due to continued pay inequity and the possibility of leaving the workforce because of pregnancy.

"ICR seems to sound reasonable to students, but there are lots of twists. It's an excuse to raise tuition, not a loan repayment plan," she said.

Shirley Bond, newly elected Minister of Advanced Education, admitted that the implementation of an ICR scheme would be part of her Ministry's discussion in the future.

"As it exists today, we will be looking at how the student loan program works. We are looking at all the issues around financial assistance and ICR may be part of our discussion."

Bond added that her Ministry will provide forgivable student loans to students entering fields that are badly understaffed in B.C., such as health care and social work, provided they agree to stay in B.C.'s "underserved communities" for five years.

As for the tuition fee freeze, Bond emphasized that her party does support it for the upcoming fiscal year. When asked about subsequent years, she pointed toward a consultation process that her party plans to implement, where members of the Liberals will meet with educators, administrators and students to discuss the "hidden costs" of post-secondary education.

"That is the purpose of the consultation process. We will work in a discussion around this issue and I look forward to discussing it with students," Bond said.

Matten, however, is skeptical about whether the Liberal consultation process will serve B.C. students effectively.

"It'll be interesting to see who they'll consult and how they interpret their findings," she said.

McFadyen, for one, intends to be at the forefront of telling the B.C. Liberals the problems with ICR. In response to a request from the CFS, Bond will meet with members of the federation at the end of June to discuss post-secondary education.

"We will be discussing the major issues affecting students at that meeting, including ICR." she said.

US economist Milton Friedman originally planned ICR in 1955 as a way to reduce the role of the state in financing public education. Advocates of the policy in the mid-1990s sought to gain support of the plan by pointing to the average student debt of $25,000 upon graduation.

In 1995, the federal Liberal government shelved its ICR proposal after the CFS mounted a massive campaign against it. The Liberals again tried to revive ICR in 1997, but lending institutions and most provinces rejected the scheme as either regressive or unworkable.

In 1993 New Zealand introduced tuition fees and an ICR scheme simultaneously. By 2005 it is estimated that student debt will be higher than the entire national debt of the country.

Triathlon for Healing a success

by Brenda Martin

Over half of the people who ran the Triathlon for Healing to raise money for the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre were first time triathletes.

"We really encourage first-time people and teams," said Sandy McLellan, Victoria Sexual Assault Centre executive director. This year Simon Whitfield, a triathlete who won a gold medal for Canada at the 2000 games, lent his name to the Simon Whitfield "First Tri" Award.

The triathlon, which starts near Elk Lake at the Saanich Commonwealth Place, includes an 800m swim, a 20km cycle and a 5km run. The race has been going on for the past eight years.

"The triathlon gives the Centre a chance to meet with other parts of the community and lets other learn more what we do. Discussion about sexualized violence is a less heavy way," said McLellan.

The triathlon raised more than ever before with $20 256 in pledges this year. The Centre fundraises 40 per cent of its budget so events like the triathlon play a vital role in the work of the Centre.

The profits from this year's race will go towards two areas: Project Respect, a prevention program aimed a youth aged 14 to 18, and direct client services such as counselling, said McLellan.

Last year, the triathlon had a donor who matched the money raised in pledges. "With the money raised last year the Centre was able to hire a counsellor for a year and reduce the waitlist to virtually nothing," said McLellan.

The idea of a fundraising triathlon was Anne Laidman's. She was working at the Centre eight years ago and was responsible for fundraising initiatives.

Laidman knew that straight running would not catch on because there were so many already happening. However, a triathlete herself, she knew there were only two other triathlons in Victoria, the Panorama Classic and the Srichinmoy, the oldest triathlon in Canada. And so the Triathlon for Healing was born.

Fort Street Cycle has been the title sponsor of the race for the past six years.

"We are honoured and privileged to be a part of it," said Doug Grans, owner of Fort Street Cycle. "We feel it is a good way for us to contribute back to the community."

Both McLellan and Laidman stressed how important the Fort Street Cycle sponsorship was to the triathlon.

"They are local people who want to contribute to the sport and the Centre," said Laidman.

UVSS poised to deliver on campaign promises

by Kevin Groves

With their mandate less than two months old, the UVSS is planning to make good on their promise to put students first and take a much more public role in campus life.

"Last year was a great year for the development of new ideas," said Jaime Matten, chair of the UVSS. "This year we plan on carrying them out. All the obvious routes are being used and this year will be a big year for information sharing."

At least one member of the UVSS is outspoken on changes he'd like to make. Adam Peters, newly elected director-at-large under an independent slate said that he intends to work with the new UVSS toward reforming the campus electoral system.

"People aren't voting for the candidates in the elections, they're voting on policy issues like the U-Pass," Peters said. "What we need to do is improve our presence in every building on campus, and bring up-to-date how our elections are run."

Only 28.6 per cent of UVic students voted in the 2001 UVSS election, while the number of spoiled votes for electoral candidates was substantially higher than votes cast on the U-Pass referendum.

Peters takes issue with UVSS electoral policy toward slates, or the grouping together of individual candidates under one banner, like the current "Putting Students First." Currently the policy says that candidates "shall not distribute or advertise by means of joint material or include multiple candidate names on material," a clause Peters said hurts independent candidates.

"I am the only Independent candidate to get in this year, and I came in last out of the directors-at-large," Peters said. "The question we need to ask is whether party politics work at the university level."

Matten agreed that UVSS electoral policy needs to be reformed, but said that prohibitions against mentioning names in candidate write-ups actually helps independents.

"The reason for not mentioning names is to prevent slate candidates from having more coverage in the election than independents, but I'm open to discussion about this issue. We've only started our discussions on the electoral policy but we plan to give it an overhaul and omit the things we think are useless," she said.

Matten added that candidates are more likely to run under a slate since they would feel "more secure" about running as a group.

"With this security, we end up with a higher number of people running for positions, which is obviously something we want to encourage," she said.

As the September blitz approaches, Peters said that one way to get students more involved this year in the "nuts and bolts" of the UVSS is to make sure students are aware that UVSS committees are open to all students who wish to contribute their ideas.

"If you want the SUB to look the way you want, promote your club or course union, or are interested in the tuition freeze, you have to join a committee. We have a responsibility to make sure that student issues are dealt with in Victoria and that students are aware of what these issues are," he said.

Jonas Gifford, newly elected Director of Finance, said that he plans to make this year's Finance Committee as approachable for students as possible.

"I've found that finance seems to be the hardest aspect of the UVSS to get students involved in, since what we talk about at committee meetings is quite complex."

Gifford said his goal this year is to be approachable, and make finance an easy environment for students to ask questions.

"Right now we have about 11 people coming to Finance Committee meetings, which is unprecedented and we want to ensure that this continues."

Times for all UVSS meetings have been fixed this year and the society has posted them on all their notice boards throughout campus. Information on the committees can also be found in the SUB newsletter, and in student planners. Members of the UVSS Executive will also have fixed office hours during semesters so that students can be sure to talk to the person they want, and the UVSS plans to speak in classrooms periodically.

"This is really the first year where the UVSS has committed themselves to this initiative, so we're learning as we go," Gifford said.

Matten added that a major focus for the UVSS this year is to improve dialogue with other student societies on campus. Traditionally, Faculties such as Law and Engineering have remained outside the pale of general campus politics.

"We've done very little work with these societies in the past," Matten said. "It's important for us to be aware of their issues."

Tom Owen, Stream-A President of the Engineering Students Society (ESS), said that one area where the UVSS could better serve the needs of Engineering students is to ensure that larger initiatives, such as the fight to keep the tuition fee freeze, address other aspects of providing better post-secondary education, like more funding to universities.

"Ultimately the average student wants to have a say in things," said Owen. "In the Engineering case, more money means more lab equipment. If the UVSS wants to tap into CFS issues, they need to address the lack of funding in our universities."

New students are also being targeted for UVSS outreach. Lindsay Baker, Volunteer Coordinator for UVic Orientation, said that the UVSS plans to make their presence felt more strongly in first-year campus tours and workshops.

photo by Kevin Groves

On the road to Cuba

by Jason Gondziola

Three Victoria residents will join 250 people on a North American Caravan to Cuba. Student Sharmeen Khan and fellow Victorians Jason Weedmark and Barb Hay will take part in the 12th semi-annual caravan.

The event is coordinated by the Harlem-based Pastors for Peace and focuses on trying to change US foreign policy toward Cuba.

"I see it as a big country taking on a little country for no reason but having a different economic system," said Weedmark. He explained that the Cuban system has many merits worth investigating. "Cuba has superior health care and virtually no homelessness," he said.

The three Victorians will rendezvous with the rest of the Cuba-bound group and cross the border from Laredo, Texas into Mexico, where they will fly to Cuba. There has been considerable resistance to the group at the border in the past. In 1996, Pastors for Peace started a hunger strike when US authorities seized Cuba-bound goods. Local activist Sharmeen Khan became involved at this time.

"Our goal is to change US policy towards Cuba," she said. "Change a blockade which is strangling Cuba economically. The point of the caravan is to be open about the wrongness of the blockade. Giving school supplies and medicine to Cuba should not be illegal."

This is her first caravan to Cuba. She visited the country in 1997 and found the experience both frustrating and inspiring. Khan feels that Western interests have always smothered the Central and South American movements for self-determination.

"The embargo is denying medicine, school supplies, and other goods to Cuba because of the US dominance in the markets," she said. "I oppose economic embargoes because of their direct effect on people."

Khan has chosen to dedicate the experience to her close friend, and fellow caravan participant for many years, Brian Rohatyn, who died last year.

The trio will spend a week in the communist country, touring various institutions and having meetings about the work that can be done to improve Cuba's situation.

The group's interest could not be more timely as Cuba is feeling the stranglehold of the looming American economy. These are trying times for the fiercely independent nation, and uncertain futures lie ahead in the waning light of Castro's rule.

The trio hopes the caravan will be a small step in bolstering a country that is regarded as an impressive example of self-determination in the face of a colonial superpower. The Victoria trio leaves on Sunday, June 17 – seven months after the last caravan.

Liberals begin to show true colours?

by Glenn Wigmore

Critics of the new provincial government are already asking whether the newly elected Liberal party is governing for all British Columbians.

"The first few days of the Liberals in power have been very bizarre," said Clay Suddaby, a spokesperson for the B.C. New Democrat Party. "There's no common thread in what they're doing."

Suddaby and others are critical of Gordon Campbell's newly formed 27-member cabinet, which is the largest in the province's history.

"It's odd that Campbell would have so many ministers when he bashed the NDP before for spending $15 million dollars on their 20-person cabinet," said Suddaby. "By Campbell's math, their new cabinet should cost somewhere around $22 million."

Campbell is also making waves with the abolishment and amalgamation of certain ministries. One of the most severe changes was the abolishment of the Ministry of Women's Equality and Aboriginal Affairs, which were lumped into a single ministry along with community oriented programs.

Suddaby wondered what the move revealed about the way the Liberal government feels about minorities and the challenges facing them.

"Lumping those areas together makes it seem like this is the ministry for those that didn't vote Liberal," he said. "They said they wouldn't get rid of certain ministries, but the first thing they did was to get rid of the ministries for the environment and aboriginal affairs."

> The Liberals have basically declared war on the nurses. Even now, the labour minister is attempting to make them work overtime hours.
>
> *Clay Suddaby*

The Liberals did create the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection to compensate for abolishing the Ministry of the Environment but so far they've focussed on financial issues, such as the controversial tax-cut plan, which will return money to British Columbians each year. This plan has come under fire because it provides much more relief for higher income earners. For example, one person who earns $25,000 a year will receive about $150, while someone who earns $150,000 will receive about $4,000 back.

Suddaby worries that the new Liberal government is also aggressively attacking the nurses union. "The Liberals have basically declared war on the nurses. Even now, the labour minister is attempting to make them work overtime hours," he said. "They were also promised an 8 per cent tax cut, but I've talked to many nurses and they don't buy it."

Public process is also an area where the Liberals have walked a fine line. When the NDP was in power, Campbell often sounded off about Glen Clark making decisions and choices without public input. However, Campbell recently approved raises in salary for certain ministers without using standard public process.

In looking to the future, Suddaby believes that Gordon Campbell and his Liberals must focus their effort on what they actually campaigned about.

"They have to remember that they govern for everybody and that they only had 58 per cent of the popular vote," he said. "They don't seem to be sticking to the platform that was presented when they were campaigning. Voters might now be seeing the true side to them."

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Thirty years of multicultural organizing and still going strong

by Bessie Chow

"A little bit of England," states the description in a local tourist guide to the small, quiet, beautiful capital of British Columbia. Yet, as I consider so many of my fellow Victoria natives with such varied ethnic backgrounds as Indonesian, Vietnamese, Spanish, Dutch, Japanese, East Indian, Middle Eastern, Latin American – just to name a few – I cannot help but wonder how many actually have a drop of English blood in them.

I am a first-generation Chinese. Like so many others, my parents immigrated from their homeland (Hong Kong) to Canada in search of better education, better opportunities, and a better life. Despite the historical depiction of Canada as being divided among either French or English over a backdrop of Aboriginal culture, I do not feel I am any less "Canadian" for my exceptional categorization.

Over the years, generations of immigrants and refugees have been gradually changing the face of Canadian culture. Each new immigrant and refugee brings with him/her a rich history, a colourful identity and a unique perspective that, when combined with others, contribute to a continual redefinition of what it means to be a member of Canadian society.

At the forefront of this "reformation" are organizations like the Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA) and the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS). Both are non-profit organizations committed to a wide-ranging number of services, activities and projects for recent and not-so-recent immigrants and refugees in the Capital Region District and surrounding areas.

photo by Bessie Chow

The ICA, which is approaching its 30th anniversary this December, was founded in 1971 for the purpose of hosting FolkFest (June 30-July 8), an effort to promote multiculturalism and anti-racism that has become the largest multicultural arts festival in Western Canada. At the urging of Immigration Canada, the ICA soon expanded its services to include citizenship and ESL classes, counselling, orientation, workshops and a host family program.

The ICA also serves as an umbrella organization for various cross-cultural agencies and events throughout Greater Victoria.

The practical component of volunteerism is described by ICA Volunteer Coordinator Winnie Lee: "Volunteering is another way to change people's outlook and break down those stereotypes and discriminatory perspectives of what immigrants and refugees are. It's a community initiative that allows [people from the mainstream community] to see the struggles that are here and what barriers that [the newcomers] have to jump through. There is a lot of education and knowledge to gain by volunteering."

In 1989, three former ICA members decided to create VIRCS in response to the rapid growth of the Victorian community. VIRCS introduced an extensive job-coaching program, various new settlement programs, as well as the Latin Caribbean Festival (held on the first weekend of August every year).

"At first we only had two small offices," recalls Gaete, who was one of the three founding members of VIRCS along with partners, Viet Tran and Hereity Hadgu. "Now we have this whole floor," he continues, indicating the spacious, friendly, well-lit, and cheerful offices that occupied the third floor of the Yates Street building. "That proves that there was a need for another organization."

Indeed, it is a lot of work for even more than one organization. Besides issues of isolation, language, culture and discrimination, other common barriers new immigrants and refugees face include transferable skills and education, refugee claimant status, housing, and economic difficulties.

These veritable barriers might explain the apprehension surrounding the absence of the Ministry Responsible for Multiculturalism and Immigration (MMI) in the list of new Cabinet appointments announced on June 5, 2001.

"There's not even a mention of multiculturalism in any of the titles of the new ministries," Wells notes. "It's worrisome because it might indicate what the direction of the new government will be."

Gaete voices similar concern about the refocusing of the Liberal government away from social and environmental issues towards issues based more on commerce and economics. "We need to take care of Mother Nature first or you won't have anywhere to spend your money," says Gaete, referring to the absence of another "left-wing" ministry, the Ministry of Environment, Lands & Parks.

Between 60 to 80 per cent of the operating revenues for both the ICA and VIRCS come from federal and provincial grants. In 1999, the MMI contributed at least 13 per cent to the overall operating budge of VIRCS and 20 per cent to the ICA. By 2000, over 40 per cent of the ICA's revenues were from the MMI.

According to new government plans, immigrant and multicultural issues will be the responsibility of the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women Services (MCAWS), which has also been put in charge of water and sewer grants and leaky condominiums.

Wells expresses her concern: "[MCAWS] is such a huge and multi-faceted ministry. I'm wondering whether or not [multiculturalism and immigrant issues] will get lost in small print, or it'll be like whatever it is that is the crisis of the moment will be responded to while the other things get pushed aside.

photo by Bessie Chow

Winnie Lee, Volunteer Coordinator (left) and Arlene Wells, Multicultural/Community Development Coordinator with the ICA

photo by Bessie Chow

Terry Reid, Volunteer Coordinator for VIRCS

"We are already expecting a cut to federal funding this coming fiscal year. Many of our outreach programs, or what we call 'project-based' programs, which are not tied to any continual funding agreement from government or elsewhere, are in danger of being cut."

At risk programs include the multicultural/community development programs, youth groups, training programs for immigrants, visible minorities and women on facilitation and other skills, and various workshops.

Nonetheless, it is still too early to tell. It has been less than a week since the announcement and even the staff within the ministries has yet to figure out what is going to happen.

So meanwhile, Lee and Wells are trying to at least maintain a more positive outlook. "We are proud of the work we do. The staff and volunteers are all very passionate and motivated. It's a good feeling when we hear so many success stories among former clients and other immigrants and refugees who have worked hard to overcome so many barriers. The support from the general community and from the government is good too. We'd rather have something to criticize than to have nothing there at all."

As for the concern about the new government's direction, Lee replies confidently: "We [the ICA] have survived 30 years, what's four more."

"One of the best things about my job is that I get to meet people who are interested in getting involved and contributing to the community," relates Terry Reid, Volunteer Coordinator for VIRCS. "I'm floored that most of [the volunteers], who walk into the office, are concerned citizens who are interested in getting involved in multiculturalism."

Indeed that sense of community is not hard to imagine, as the scent of pizza mingling with that of East Indian cuisine drifts through the windows of the VIRCS office while the voices of staff members and volunteers in a multitude of different tongues add further vibrancy to the atmosphere.

There are anywhere from 200 to 250 volunteers at VIRCS year-round, with the number rising to over 400 during festival season. Meanwhile, the ICA has thousands of volunteers in various departments, agencies, and/or cultural events held throughout the year. These numbers are encouraging.

"When you move from one country to another, or one culture to a different culture, there are a lot of problems, and you need all the help you can get," asserts Carlos Gaete, Executive Director of VIRCS, and former refugee from Chile.

Both the ICA and VIRCS have mandates to assist newcomers to Canadian society, to help them overcome barriers of culture, race, language, and anything else that might affect their participation in the community, while promoting human rights and cultural sensitivity.

"People who come here from other countries feel very isolated," explains Arlene Wells, Multicultural/Community Development Coordinator with the ICA, referring to the segregation within Victorian community. "For instance, it is very hard for people to connect, and to find jobs. There's a difficulty anyway in Victoria because it is so much based on who you know. People with language barriers or who are another colour have a particularly harder time."

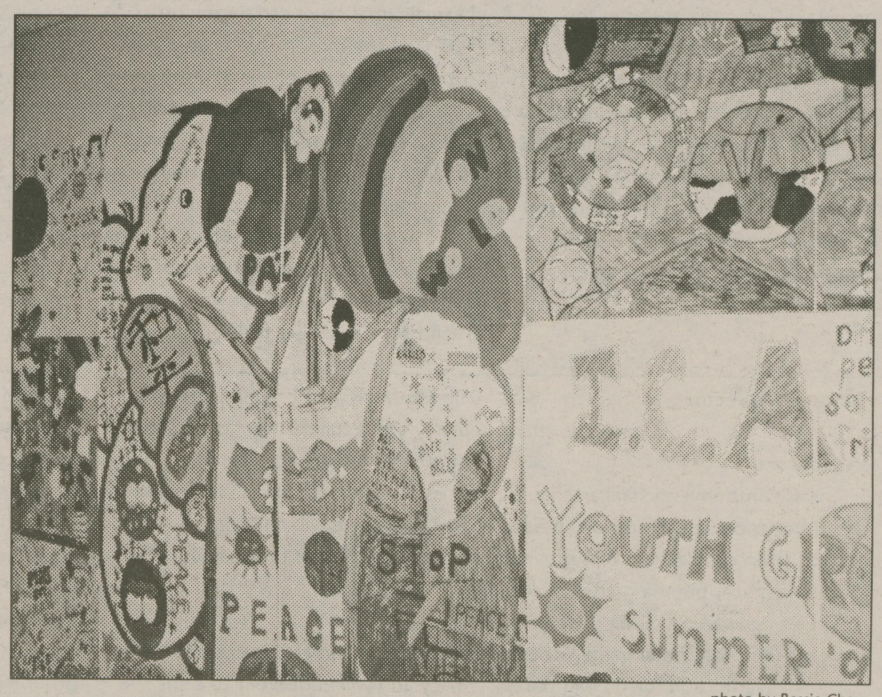

photo by Bessie Chow

A collage created by the Intercultural Association youth group

EDITORIAL

The corporate geography of university campuses

Imagine: it is the first day of school in September. You are a Camosun College student. You're trying to figure out where your classes are. You glance down at your timetable and notice that your first class is in the Royal Bank Room and your second class is right across the hall in the Pacific Business Equipment Room. You are a little skeptical when you first enter the Young Building, wondering if you'll even be able to find your classes on time, when you realize that the rooms have been renamed. This is not some sick joke but the reality of corporate sponsored public education.

The Camosun College Foundation has recently renamed rooms and wings in the Young Building to correspond with donations the college received to make renovations to the building. And, rumour has it, that here at UVic there are similar issues on the table. The problem is that one never really can know about these name changes until the shiny new plaques go up, as these decisions are made in closed sessions at Board of Governors meetings.

Corporate sponsorship of universities and the naming of university buildings, classrooms and positions is not an entirely new phenomena. Sony donated $10 million to McGill University for the Sony Fine Arts Studio. The University of Toronto has a Royal Bank Professor of Social Policy, a McCain Chair of Child Poverty, and the Munk Centre of International Relations. With donations to academic institutions there are always strings attached.

Somehow, in British Columbia we've been able to resist this trend... until recently. In late May, Bell Globemedia Corporation, the company that owns CTV, the *Globe and Mail*, and internet portals Sympatico and Lycos – announced that it would donate $1.5 million for the construction of a new media studies centre at the British Columbia Institute of Technology. This centre, not surprisingly, is to be called the BCE New Media Centre for Excellence.

The recent renaming of rooms at Camosun College, and the rumoured renaming of a certain video lab in a certain visual arts building here at UVic, suggest that corporate sponsorship of public education is becoming a definitive trend.

And, as universities come to depend on and compete for corporate sponsorship, governments can slink quietly away from their responsibility to provide quality education. Corporations tattoo their names on university campuses, leaving a permanent geographical mark. At this rate, there is the threat that education will become a product to be purchased from Telus, Bell Globemedia Corporation, Canwest Global Studios, or any number of other corporations, instead of a service provided through public funding.

How long until corporations and corporate agendas move from simply naming buildings to dictating curriculum? How long until one must be required to open an account at a certain bank before being admitted into a university? How long until a portion of our tuition fees will be allocated to a purchase stocks in a certain company? In the present, these ideas may seem far fetched, but if this dirty dancing between universities and corporations continues, this may be our future. Will we regret this future?

MONOLOGUE

Death headlines media

by Brad Buie

On Monday, June 11, after many appeals for a stay, a delay over undisclosed FBI documents, the gathering of a press horde, and a self-rejection of attempts to commute his death sentence, Timothy McVeigh was executed. He had been convicted in the 1995 bombing of the federal government building in Oklahoma City, which killed 168 people. On a closed circuit live broadcast, survivors and relatives of victims watched as he was given a lethal injection.

No other case has attracted such widespread media coverage in the US. The debate over the use of the death penalty became, for a time, an issue at the forefront of the collective consciousness. However, the circumstances of Timothy McVeigh's execution has narrowed the ethical question to whether it is ever justifiable for the state to take a life, for most of the usual arguments against its practice fall short for McVeigh.

First, there is the argument that he might have actually been innocent, that his conviction was an error. More than a few death row inmates have been cleared of guilt through the introduction of new evidence or the development of new DNA testing. But McVeigh admitted to his terrorism frankly, saying "I'm sorry so many people had to die but that is the nature of the beast," implying that such human costs are necessary, but for what? The survival of freedom and the government threatened?

Second, McVeigh was not an ethnic minority, like the majority on death row. The large number of black men going to the execution chamber testifies to the racial inequality that prevails in the US. But McVeigh was white.

Third, the nature of McVeigh's crime was not a domestic dispute gone wrong but the largest mass murder in American history. Repeated over and over in the media is the reminder that among his victims were 19 children. The sheer horror of his crime has caused many who have doubted the death penalty to embrace it in this instance.

With the failure of these arguments against capital punishment for McVeigh, only one question remains: is the gas chamber or the electric chair or lethal injection justifiable punishment in this most horrible of crimes? All other arguments are flaws of a system that could be reformed, but to answer no to ever using capital punishment would make them irrelevant.

But how to answer yes or no?

The popular media has expressed differing sentiments, depending on where they are from. In Europe where capital punishment has been abolished, the French daily, *Le Monde*, featured a front page cartoon of a stadium full of Americans wearing glasses for a better view of the execution. Also, the EU and Amnesty International have condemned the execution.

Here in Canada where the death penalty doesn't exist, the *Globe and Mail* wrote invectively of the execution as the "most American of American events," speaking of its national penchant for vengeance. However, the *Times Colonist* ran a cartoon sketch of the infamous photograph of a firefighter cradling in his arms a baby who had been injured in the blast. The caption above read, "A Reminder Why," supposedly supplying a reason why the execution should take place. In the *New York Times*, the editorial page expressed opinions both for and against it.

But whatever answer media gives, it is sure to pervade more than the criminal justice system. Up close for the victims an execution may provide relief for their hatred or a degree of closure, but from afar it becomes an object of voyeurism and spectacle.

STUDENT VOICE

Henderson Rock's reign of terror finally brought to end

Administrators, public workers join forces to subdue traffic obstacle

by Michael Arsenault

Henderson Rock, a large mass of stone, surrounding moss and grasses, whose stubborn resistance to concrete and tarmac has held local students in a grip of terror for over four decades, was finally blown to pieces today to make room for a new type of sidewalk.

The new sidewalk, consisting of 24 identical 1 x 1-metre concrete squares laid end-to-end adjacent to the Henderson Road-University Drive access, is described as "safe and convenient."

"My students, you are lucky," announced Elwy Blewitt, director of the University Paved-Access Response Team (U-PART). "As University of Victoria students, you have a right to enter our beautiful university on flat, level, state-of-the-art concrete surfaces. Now more university access roads are mirror images of each other."

Most of UVic's entrance routes are bordered by white concrete or black tarmac walk-ways, depending on location.

"We thought black and white would be good symbols of the university," Blewitt said. "A sturdy white picket fence may be erected to cordon off the territory beyond the walkways to protect students against plants, rocks, and moss."

Blewitt said U-PART plans to pave most trail surfaces south of Ring Road to co-ordinate with parking lots 1, across from the Elliot Building, and 6, beside the Fine Arts Building. This will ensure a uniform weather-proof surface for those wishing to explore Finnerty Gardens. Blewitt is also considering straightening the trails into a more convenient "grid" pattern.

"Today, the trails have notable imperfections along them, such as unexpected bends and an unpleasant earthy texture. Some of the trails double-back in inconvenient loops," Blewitt said.

"I am sure that, with the present state of awareness in the UVic student community, there would be no objections to our organization dynamiting further natural obstacles that impede the progress of commuters."

Blewitt said the neat, uniform appearance of the Henderson walkway will be a boon for potential UVic undergraduates. "We are delighted that the first things people notice when they enter the university are the flat roads and carefully painted curbs. With the removal of this inconvenient slab of rock at the Henderson Road entrance, pedestrians can enjoy their commute to the university as smoothly as motorists enjoy it."

Blewitt remarked that most students would not notice the rock was replaced by a sidewalk. "We are working quickly and efficiently, with drills and blasting compound, to eliminate this particular rock, and see that it never causes a problem again."

LETTERS

Apology to Mr. Bruce Partridge Past President of the University of Victoria (1969-72)

In the fall of 1998, the Martlet Publishing Society published a book called *Newspaper R(evolution): The Martlet 50 Years*, a 50th anniversary reminiscence of the history of this newspaper. In that book, the Society caused to be re-published stories that were originally published in 1971 during Mr. Bruce Partridge's tenure as President of the University of Victoria.

In publishing the said book, the Society did not intend to suggest that Mr. Partridge in any way misrepresented his academic credentials to the University of Victoria or to any other party. Nor does the Society suggest that Mr. Partridge's American law degrees, earned in 1950 and 1952 through the Blackstone College of Law, were not lawfully obtained. The selection committee, which unanimously recommended Mr. Partridge's appointment as president, and the University Board of Governors, which appointed him, were fully aware of Mr. Partridge's academic credentials. It is our understanding that Mr. Partridge was considered and exceptional administrator. Mr. Partridge showed restraint in not taking legal action in connection with the 1971 stories placing the interests of the University of Victoria ahead of his own.

After he left the University of Victoria, Mr. Partridge pursued a L.L.B. degree from the University of British Columbia and graduated second in his class, having completed his legal studies in two and one half instead of the usual three years. He then went on to successful careers both in legal and in academic circles and is the author of a textbook on management in Canada.

The Martlet Publishing Society is deeply sorry for harm that our publication has caused Mr. Partridge and his family and unequivocally offers its most sincere apologies to him.

The Martlet Publishing Society,
D. Climenhaga
J. Trueman
M. Vallis

looking for something to do this summer? why not come help out at *the Martlet*? we're in SUB B011, and we have windows, so you can at least see the sunshine...

Just for kicks

by Kevin Groves

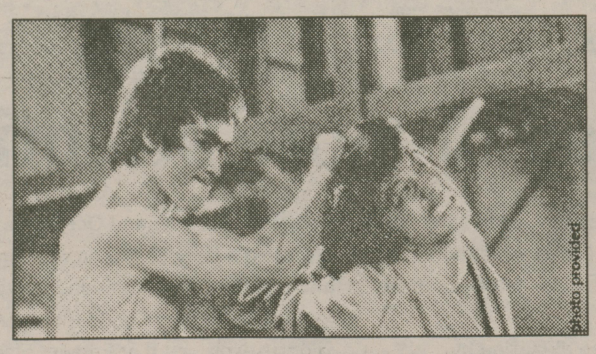
photo provided

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When I got to this point again last April, I decided to rent every martial arts movie that I could get my hands on from the local video store. In my travels through chop-socky I have discovered a few important truths: that well choreographed action scenes are very entertaining; that if you're one of those people who requires a plot, go to a different section; that dubbed voices are extremely hilarious (especially when poorly dubbed); oh yeah, and Jackie Chan can kick your butt. So here are a few of the flicks out there that might catch your eye, not to be recommended for those romantic evenings when you want to spend quality time with your significant other.

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The infinitely credible Jet Li plays a Chinese martial artist during the Japanese Occupation who spends some time in Japan, synthesizes kung fu with karate (no easy task), and then returns to his old haunts to teach it. Widely entertaining, this movie features some brilliant group and individual action scenes, and at the end you get to see Jet Li take his belt off and spank the villain with it repeatedly, making those really satisfying whiplash sounds. If that doesn't scream entertainment, I don't know what does. **The grade: A-**

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You have to admire a man who has broken every bone in his body doing his own stunts. Widely considered to be Jackie Chan's best movie, after half an hour of watching it you begin to see why. Chan plays a real life master of Drunken Boxing who, legend has it, once fought off 30 attackers at once. The movie combines witty dialogue, a plot that actually isn't that cheesy (depending on your outlook), action scenes that border on the surreal, and the usual amount of slapstick (there's a point in the movie where someone inexplicably rips off Chan's shirt and then pours water on him, so he'll look waxed up as he kicks butt). Special congratulations should go to Anita Mui who plays Chan's stepmother and is hysterical. Rent this movie for no other reason than you get to see Chan get drunk (he really does), and still deliver killer action scenes. **The grade: A**

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Perhaps the failure of this movie lies in Jackie Chan's desire to cater more to the whims of Hollywood, rather than sticking to what he does best. Chan plays a member of an elite CIA team left for dead in the jungles of South Africa. Suffering from amnesia throughout the movie (he gets up on high ground a few times and screams out "Who am I;" cheese that makes even the most forgiving viewer lactose-intolerant) Chan is adopted by a nameless South African tribe who, catering to would-be forgotten stereotypes, assumes that "Who am I" is Chan's name. As if that bad taste weren't enough, there are too few action scenes in this movie to keep the viewer entertained enough. Save this one for the shelf. **The grade: C**

Twin Warriors

Jet Li and Michelle Yeoh team up for a bit of tag team action in this one. Li plays a Shaolin monk who, along with his best friend, is forced to enter the real world where each will eventually take widely different career paths. What makes this movie particularly satisfying is the unusual amount of character development. You'll get to see a crazy Jet Li lurch around a courtyard, looking like a escapee from a Guns and Roses concert, talking to ducks as he tries to figure out the mystery of tai chi. There also appears to be a tendency for head butting in scenes where Jet Li and friend break 20 cinderblocks over their heads, or when Jet Li uses his head to take out a group of enemies. Use your head and rent this movie. **The grade: A**

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Teargas and billy clubs come to Fernwood

Movie night raises money for Québec Legal Defense

by Jason Gondziola

On June 2 about 80 people took in three films worth of protests, conflict and police brutality at the Fernwood Community Association. The films showed scenes of civil disobedience from the past few years and raised $166 for the Québec Legal Defence Fund, a fund to help those arrested while protesting outside the Summit of the Americas in Québec City, last April. The night also featured a keynote speech by local artist Richard Brooks, who was struck by a rubber bullet at the protests.

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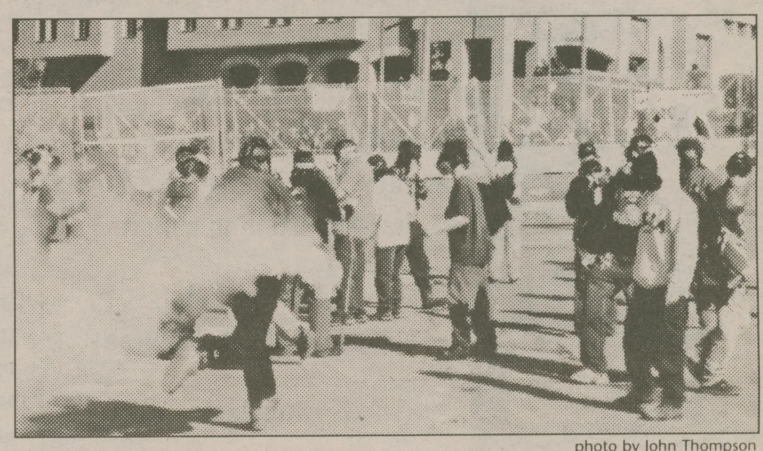
photo by John Thompson

Maelstrom transcends the ordinary

by Peter Verin

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Canada's oceans in need of more attention

by Lorna Mace

Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the International Oceans Institute of Canada have organized a three part national discussion series called "Oceans Explorations – Learning from our Oceans." On May 24, the second of the three discussions was held at the Alix Goolden Performance Hall in Victoria. The talk was moderated by Paul Kennedy, host of CBC Radio One's "Ideas." The panel presentation also took place in Halifax, Nova Scotia and Iqaluit, Nunavut, cities that, along with Victoria, make up the three coasts of Canada.

According to the presentation, the orca population has been decreasing for the past five years and it could be another five years before the orca species could regenerate. The main causes for this decrease in population are the lack of fish, which the orcas eat, and the increase in PCBs in our waters. The goal of the discussion is to allow ocean experts to voice their opinions and concerns with Canada's waterways, and to let the public direct their questions to speakers with a variety of backgrounds and qualifications.

Although all five panelists may have had different explanations about the problems we face with our environment, they seemed to agree on one basic issue. Canada's oceans need more attention, especially concerning the questionable future of sea-life.

Paul Kennedy began the discussion by expressing his enthusiasm for the goal of educating the Canadian public on key issues regarding our ocean. "Everybody who lives in Canada is part of the oceans constituency," he said.

The first speaker on the panel was Christine Hunt, a special native advisor to the minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. Her speech outlined the anger that she and other First Nations people express concerning European commercial fishing. She stressed the need for integrated management of Canada's waters, management that includes the First Nations community. "We had ecosystem management long before contact," she said.

Hunt spoke for the First Nations people and noted the destruction European commercial fishing has had on both our environment, and the well being of First Nations people across Canada. "This is my ocean people's rant," she said. "It's from the heart."

However, Richard Beamish, senior research scientist to Fisheries and Oceans Canada, expressed a fairly optimistic view towards the future of the Canadian fishing industry. "I happen to think we're pretty good managers of fish," he said. He explained that fisheries officials are improving their understanding of fish population trends and acting accordingly to manage the stock.

Chris Garrett, Lansdowne Professor of Ocean Physics, joked that the title of the discussion should be changed from, "Learning from our Oceans" to "Listening to our Scientists." He defended scientists by explaining that science is quite often used as a means of support for government, economic and legal issues.

After the scientists spoke, author and conservationist Terry Glavin reminded the panel how wrong science can be. "At the end of the day, we know nothing more than what the maritime communities already know," he said. He said he believes that there is a contrast between what we would like science to do, and what potential science has to do for us, yet urges the public not to place unreasonable expectations on scientists. "Do what you will, but cause no harm," he advised the panel.

According to Laurie MacBride, executive director of the Georgia Strait Alliance, less than one per cent of our coastal waters are protected land. This is in contrast to the twelve percent of other land that the government has conserved, she said. Some of the main concerns MacBride expressed on behalf of the Alliance included the increase of estrogen "gender bender" chemicals that are found in our water, the high levels of PCBs found in our orca whales, toxic red tides and oil spills. Three-quarters of the population of British Columbia live around the Georgia Strait, and as MacBride points out, everything finds it's way to the ocean. "We have to remember we all live upstream," she said.

MacBride and the Alliance believe that importance must be placed on the tourism industry combined with conservation, in order to support Canadians while paying attention to the interrelationship of species. According to an optimistic MacBride, there should be co-management of the waters that include the First Nations people, in order to combine new knowledge with existing knowledge. "It's all about the choices we make," she said.

You must train, grasshopper

by Kevin Groves

"Kevin just studies karate because he's tired of big bullies stealing his lunch money."

I look over at my friend Jeremy but the witty comeback slips from my brain. He's right: I have been practicing a martial art for the last eight months. Two nights a week I make the pilgrimage up to the Braefoot Community Centre on Mackenzie Street and learn how to end a 'situation' with minimal effort, safeguarded by the constant drilling in how the arm break I just learned should only be used as a last resort.

It's not the techniques that have me hooked. What I go for is the peace of mind I can draw from the exercise. Every night I arrive strained from the day's worry, and leave strengthened against a world where fear, anxiety and stress are my constant companions.

When I step through the door of the dojo (school), I bow, take off my shoes, and see sensei (teacher) Chris pushing a cloth broom across the floor. When you're at the bottom of the totem pole, you're taught to approach a higher rank and ask them if you can take over their job as a show of respect. It's more of a formality – usually they'll tell you that they'd rather do it.

I change into my gi (uniform), step out onto the floor and stretch out. The minutes tick by in fervent anticipation, and other students begin to fill the room. There is a quiet respect in the air, and little talk about the outside world. It is not important what you did last week: you're simply here to learn.

"Everyone LINE UP!"

Gis snap as we obey the command. Students flurry into three lines, highest rank at the front, like a multicoloured flower arrangement fitting into place. We focus in front, and the sensei orders us into saiza, the formal kneeling position.

Zazen. Meditation.

Sit in a kneeling position, knees together, feet crossed over each other. The back is straight "as though suspended from a string," and the palms lie flat on the thighs. Close your eyes, relax, and breathe, in through the nose and out through the mouth. Always breathe in quickly and take in more air than necessary. When you exhale, do it for as long as you can, because a person is at their weakest when breathing into themselves, and strongest when breathing out.

As I relax my worries, like mental exfoliation, begin to melt away. I mentally look back over the path my doubts and fears have taken and grin slightly. Only I remain.

"You are climbing up a steep mountain," the sensei says as we breathe. "There are many people climbing with you, but as you continue some begin to drop off the mountain until only a small number of you are left. When you get to the top you look out to see a much larger mountain than the one you've just taken. That is martial arts. Practice until the uncomfortable becomes comfortable, and the comfortable becomes natural, because nothing that is easy is ever worth anything."

Good words to live by.

We come back to our feet and the first class begins. The sensei leads us through a few stretches and then we go through basic kicks, targeting a partner with light touches. I used to be afraid of hurting my virgin feet but I don't hesitate now. The techniques come more easily, with nothing evasive. Power delivered to the opponent.

"If you'd needed shoes, you'd have been born with them on," the sensei reminds us. We shout our agreement and the dojo reverberates with our voices.

Next we train kata, or form, motions designed to strengthen the user's karate techniques. We begin slowly, always with an imaginary opponent visualized, and the techniques begin to blur as we do the kata faster. By the time we can rest, condensation drips from the windows, and sweat pours off our lathered bodies in tiny droplets of spent energy.

We're allowed a 10-minute break and then the second class lines up. We are led into a circle and assume straddle-stance: feet out two shoulder-widths, bend the knees out, and point the toes forward. Sit down in the stance until you feel a slight pull in each leg and hold it. We raise our fists and punch to the count: one, two, one, two.

This might sound easy, but it isn't. Picture a slow pain that creeps up your lower legs until your entire body is in an agony that's like running the gauntlet multiple times. It doesn't matter how big you are: A few students in my class are 200-pound giants and they have just as hard a time with it.

After awhile I begin to tune in and out of consciousness, and my legs have long since gone numb. The sensei asks if anyone's tired and a few white belts nod their agreement. "Good!" he says, "everyone go get your coats!"

We don our jackets and resume our trek toward exhaustion. I sweat more than I ever have, and feel the blackness that tells me I'm on the verge of passing out. We are told to kiai, or yell, after the punches, pushing our limits to the brink and then leaping beyond. I grit my teeth against the numbness, and mentally prepare myself to endure or fall over. Either suits me.

And then it is over. I look around and feel a quiet satisfaction, as the sensei flicks off the lights for a few minutes of meditation. While we are relaxed the sensei fires a few Zen sayings at us, like tiny bites of an exotic dish, and I contemplate them in my young impatient mind for a moment and try to make sense of them: What did your face look like before it was born? How far is halfway up an endless staircase?

I grab my stuff and prepare to head home. The sensei wishes us a great evening, and I walk out into the summer night and feel more aware than before. I take a deep breath, and pause for a moment to stare skyward as the moon comes out from behind a cloud. The glow creeps toward me, in tiny slivers at first, and then expanding into a great carpet of silver light. I wrap myself in the reflected luminescence and then continue walking home.

Since a young age, society's moral demands are thrust upon us like a giant ball and chain that we can never escape from. When we do something wrong our parents chastise us: "Don't do that, it's bad," and this conditioning is often retained into adulthood, like an everlasting echo from the original chastisement.

In the dojo this mentality is left at the door. It is welcome, even accepted, that you do something wrong, because only through failure can you truly improve. When I leave, I feel refreshed and ready to stay strong in the face of life's challenges.

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BILLBOARDS

ON CAMPUS

For those of you interested in fly fishing, check out the current Maltwood gallery exhibit: Roderick Haig-Brown: A Legacy. The Maltwood is open Mon. - Fri. from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. until July 24.

Bike Lockers available: See SUB General Info Booth for rental at summer rates. More bicycle info at web.uvic.ca/uvbikes

OFF CAMPUS

The Moss Street Market is enjoying another season of organic produce and herbs, organic baked goods, crafts and a variety of interesting creations. Drop by Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. to see what the market has to offer this year. The market is located at Sir James Douglas School, Thurlow + Fairfield.

After visiting the Moss Street Market on June 23, head over to the Garry Oak Room for the SIOPA fundraising clothing, books, music... sale (everything is a buck!) from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

VOLUNTEERS

People needed to help set up an independent media presence in Victoria. Call Krisztina at 721-8629 for details.

LOST & FOUND

Fiendish procrastinator! You've got my sketchbook still and I need it back desperately. 385-7374.

HELP WANTED

Help keep B.C. wild! Paid door to door canvassing positions available for Victoria area. Western Canada Wilderness Committee Call 388-9292.

HEY YOU!

Thanks to all the creatures downtown who helped me deliver the wheelbarrow full of petals. Reds, yellows, oranges, purples.

There are stars outside your window at night, you can see them from your bed. Thank you for sharing them, and so much more, with me.

Dark haired sun goddess who works too hard: don't frown so much or your face will stay that way forever.